



STAFF REPORT

Response To Recommendations Of The San Mateo County 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury

Honorable Mayor and Council Members

Summary

The San Mateo County 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury has filed its final reports, and three of those reports contain recommendations that, by State law, must be responded to by the City of Belmont. The three subject areas of the reports are Bicycle Safety, Warrant Enforcement, and Handling of Forensic Evidence. Staff has prepared responses on behalf of the City, which responses must be endorsed by the City Council.

Background and Discussion

The Civil Grand Jury is empanelled each year in each County in the State; their charge, under State law, is to review local governmental operations and make recommendations for improvements. The scope of their investigations is not limited but in practice many Civil Grand Juries focus their attention on County operations; that apparently has been the case in San Mateo County.

The San Mateo County 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury has filed its final reports, which cover a variety of topics. Council may be aware of some of the Grand Jury's investigations, because some of their reports have received coverage in the local press. Three of the reports contain recommendations that are directed (among others) to the City of Belmont; they are:

- Bicycle Safety
- Warrant Enforcement
- Handling of Forensic Evidence (Crime Lab)

All of the recommendations relating to the City of Belmont have been directed to the City Council, so the Council is required to officially respond. Staff has copies of the full reports pertaining to the City, if any Council member would like to review them. State law requires a response by a certain date, which in these cases is around August 10.

Staff has prepared responses to the recommendations, which are incorporated in the attached Resolution. Following Council adoption of the Resolution, the responses will be officially transmitted to the Superior Court Judge who is presiding over the Grand Jury.

In general, the responses indicate no particular required action on behalf of the City. In some cases, the responses pledge a continuation of efforts already underway.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact directly related to the responses themselves. In some cases (e.g., additional bicycle-related facilities), full accomplishment of the recommendation would require further funding than has been identified.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the attached Resolution be adopted, thereby authorizing the City Manager to transmit the official responses to the recommendations related to the City of Belmont to the San Mateo County 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury.

Attachment

Resolution

Respectfully submitted,

Jere A. Kersnar
City Manager

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION RESPONDING TO RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SAN MATEO COUNTY 2002-2003 CIVIL GRAND JURY

WHEREAS, the San Mateo County 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury has released its final reports; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belmont is required to respond to recommendations contained in three of said final reports, dealing with Bicycle Safety, Warrant Enforcement, and Handling of Forensic Evidence; and

WHEREAS, the City of Belmont has prepared appropriate responses and wishes to transmit them, as required by State law, to the Presiding Judge of the Civil Grand Jury.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the City Council of the City of Belmont as follows:

Section 1. The responses to recommendations of the San Mateo County 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury relating to Bicycle Safety, Warrant Enforcement, and Handling of Forensic Evidence, and pertaining to the City of Belmont, attached hereto and made a part hereof, are hereby accepted.

Section 2. The City Manager is hereby authorized and directed to transmit said responses to the Presiding Judge of the San Mateo County 2002-2003 Civil Grand Jury, in accordance with State law.

* * * * *

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was duly and regularly passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Belmont at a regular meeting thereof held on July 22, 2003 by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

NOES, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

ABSTAIN, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

ABSENT, COUNCILMEMBERS: _____

CLERK of the City of Belmont

APPROVED:

MAYOR of the City of Belmont

**City Of Belmont's Response To
BICYCLE SAFETY
IN SAN MATEO COUNTY**

This is in response to the 2002-2003 Grand Jury report filed on May 15, 2003 on Bicycle Safety in San Mateo County. The following are the City of Belmont's responses to each of the recommendations outlined in the Grand Jury report:

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Within one year, San Mateo County and every city without a long-term strategic bicycle safety and transportation plan should develop one that includes:

- a. The priorities set forth in the San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle Route Plan.
- b. A bicycle advisory committee
- c. At least one city employee whose job responsibilities involve bicycle transportation and safety issues.
- d. Coordination of roadway construction projects with neighboring cities.

Response to Recommendation 1:

The City of Belmont partially agrees with the finding. The recommendations of the San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle Route Plan relating to Belmont have been implemented. The Public Works Director has been designated to respond to bicycle transportation and safety issues.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The County and cities should seek grant funding to support bicycle projects and programs in their communities.

Response to Recommendation 2:

The City of Belmont agrees with the finding. The City is aggressively seeking grant funding to fund the pedestrian/bicycle bridge project, as well as other projects, identified in the San Mateo County Comprehensive Bicycle Route Plan.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

C/CAG should increase its efforts to address bicycle issues within the cities by:

- a. Developing a community outreach program for bicyclists that includes the distribution of designated bicycle route maps and safety tips, and provisions of free maps to local bicycle shops and the non-profit bicycle organizations.
- b. Incorporating in its Congestion Management Plan the requirement that consideration must be given to bicycle safety during new construction and roadway improvement projects.

Response to Recommendation 3:

The City of Belmont generally agrees with the finding. However, C/CAG is a separate joint powers agency and subject to budget constraints. Belmont is only one member of C/CAG and cannot implement this recommendation unilaterally.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

C/CAG should prioritize and fund projects that demonstrate inter city coordination of bicycle projects, e.g., bicycle lanes and paths.

Response to Recommendation 4:

The City of Belmont partially agrees with the finding. As noted above, Belmont is only one member of C/CAG and cannot implement this recommendation unilaterally. The City of Belmont believes that high priority should be given to fund projects that remove significant barriers to bicyclists. An example would be the pedestrian/ bicycle bridge project in Belmont, which will provide a critical connection between the City of Belmont and Redwood Shores, the San Francisco Bay Trail, the Ridge Trail, and the Caltrain Station.

**City Of Belmont's Response To
WARRANT ENFORCEMENT
IN SAN MATEO COUNTY**

This is in response to the 2002-2003 Grand Jury report filed on May 15, 2003 on Warrant Enforcement in San Mateo County. The following are the City of Belmont's responses to each of the recommendations outlined in the Grand Jury report:

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The Police Chiefs' Association and Sheriff's Office should study the feasibility of creating a centralized County Warrant Detail under the jurisdiction of the Sheriff to serve and enforce warrants for both the County and cities County-wide. Alternately, the Sheriff's Office and city police department should develop a standardized policy for coordinated enforcement of arrest warrants and bench warrants.

Response to Recommendation 2:

The City of Belmont agrees with the finding. There needs to be greater collaboration between the Police Departments and Sheriff's Office involving the service of warrants. The President of the San Mateo County Police Chiefs and Sheriff's Association will place this issue on their agenda for discussion during their November Training Conference. They will also be reviewing the policies surrounding warrant service in the County.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Greater use should be made of programs such as the Ad Hoc Task Force to reduce the backlog of outstanding warrants.

Response to Recommendation 3:

The City of Belmont agrees with the finding. By working together with the County Sheriff's Office and other law enforcement agencies we have the potential to reduce the backlog of warrants presently in the system. The President of the San Mateo County Police Chiefs and Sheriff's Association will bring this issue before the Association members for discussion.

**City Of Belmont's Response To
HANDLING OF FORENSIC EVIDENCE
IN SAN MATEO COUNTY**

This is in response to the 2002-2003 Grand Jury report on Handling of Forensic Evidence in San Mateo County. The following is the City of Belmont's response to the recommendation outlined in the Grand Jury report:

RECOMMENDATION 52:

Police Departments in San Mateo County and the Sheriff's investigation units should review and update their respective investigation protocols regarding how first responders manage various kinds of crime scenes and whom they should call.

Response to Recommendation 52:

The City of Belmont agrees with the finding. Working in collaboration, the Sheriff, District Attorney and San Mateo County Police Chiefs completed a review of the County-wide Sexual Assault protocol. In the future the Police Chiefs' Association will be reviewing other County-wide investigative protocols, including the County-wide Homicide Protocol.